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By the King.

¶ A Proclamation against the disorderly Printing,
vttering, and dispersing of Bookes,
Pamphlets, &c.



Hereas the three and twentieth day of Iune, in the eight and twentieth yeere of the Raigne of Our late deare Sister, Queene Elizabeth, for the repressing of sundry intolerable offences, troubles, and disturbances, as well in the Church, as in the Ciuill Government of the state and Common-weale, occasioned by the disorderly Printing and Selling of Bookes, a Decree was made in the high Court of Starre-chamber, containing many iust and prouident Ordinances for preventing of those inconueniences; And amongst the rest, That no person or persons should imprint, or cause to be imprinted, any Booke, worke, or Copy, against the forme and meaning of any Restraint or Ordinance, contained, or to be contained in any Statute or Lawes of this Realme, or in any Injunction, made or set forth by her Maiestie, or her Prinie Councell; or against the true intent and meaning of any Letters Patents, Commissions, or Prohibitions vnder the Great Seale of ENGLAND, or contrary to any allowed Ordinance, set downe for the good Governance of the Company of Stationers within the City of London, vpon paine of imprisonment by the space of sixe Moneths, without Baile or Mainprise, and such further punishment as in the said Decree is set downe; And that euery person that should wittingly sell, vtter, put to sale, binde, stich or sow, or wittingly cause to be solde, vttered, put to sale, bound, stiched, or sowed, any Bookes or Copies whatsoever, Printed contrary to the intent and true meaning of the Ordinances or Articles aforesaid, should suffer three moneths imprisonment for his or their offence. The true intent and meaning of which said Decree hath beene cautelously abused and eluded, by Printing in the parts beyond the Sea, and elsewhere, as well sundry seditious, schismaticall, and scandalous Bookes and Pamphlets, as also such allowed Bookes, workes and writings, as haue beene imprinted within the Realme, by such, to whom the sole Printing thereof by Letters Patents, or lawfull Ordinance or Authoritie doeth appertaine, according to the true intent of the said Decree, and by importing the same into this Our Realme. Wee willing, not onely to tread in the steps of our said deare Sister, but to adde such further strength as shall be meete, to those prouident and good Orders made in her time, haue thought fit to publish and declare vnto all Our Subiects, That it is Our expresse will and Commandement, that the said Decree be from henceforth strictly obserued, and put in execution.

And to meet with the malice and craft of such, as by sleight or cunning shall attempt, or goe about to vndermine, or auoid all or any part of the said Decree, we doe straitely prohibit and forbid, that no person or persons whatsoever, either Our naturall borne Subject, Denizen, or Stranger, doe at any time hereafter, either within Our owne Dominions, or without, imprint, or cause to be imprinted, or bring in, or cause to be brought in, into this Our Realme, or towne, stich, binde, sell, put sale, or disperse any seditious, schismaticall, or other scandalous Bookes, or Pamphlets whatsoever, or any other booke or bookes (though lawfull or allowed to bee printed by such to whom the printing thereof doth belong) which shall be printed contrary to the true intent of the sayd Decree, or shalbe printed out of this Realme, of purpose to auoyd the said Decree, or any prohibition or restraint conteyned in any Letters Patents, Priuiledge, or lawfull ordinance, vpon paine of Our indignation and heauy displeasure and of the paines, punishments and imprisonments, conteyned in the sayd Decree, and such further censures as by Our Court of Star-chamber, and high Commission respectiue, shall be thought meet to be inflicted on them, for such their offences.

And we doe straitly charge, authorize, and command the Master and Keepers, or Wardens of the Mysterie or Art of Stationers of the Citie of London, and their Successors and their Deputies, that they from time to time (taking with them such officers, as in, or by their Charters or the said Decree are appointed) doe make carefull and diligent search for all such scandalous and offensive Bookes or Pamphlets, as are, or shall be imported into this Realme, or here imprinted, contrary to this Our Royall Commandement, and seize the same, and doe their vttermost indeuours, as well for suppressing thereof, as for bringing the Offenders vnto Justice, as they the said Master, Wardens, and their Deputies, and euery of them will answere their neglect at their perils:

Williing, and hereby straitly charging and commanding all and euery Our Iustices of Peace, Mayors, Sheriffes, Bayliffes, Constables, and headboroughes, and all Customers, Comptrollers, Searchers, Wayters, and all other Our Officers, Ministers, and Subjects whatsoever, as they tender Our fauour, and will auoyd Our indignation and displeasure, from time to time, to their vttermost powers, to see this Our Royall pleasure duely executed, and to be ayding and assisting to the persons before mentioned in the due execution of this Our commandement.

Given at Our Mannour of Hampton Court, the five and twentieth day of Semptember, in the one and twentieth yeere of Our Raigne of Great Britaine, France, and Ireland.



God saue the King.

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Printers to the Kings most Excellent Maiestie.
ANNO M. DC. XXIII.